

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

CNO IMMEDIATE

COMSC IMMEDIATE

CINCPACFLT IMMEDIATE

CINCPACREPHIL IMMEDIATE

COMSEVENTHFLT IMMEDIATE

COMUSNAVPHIL IMMEDIATE

COMSCO SUBIC BAY RP IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, VN, PH

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE BOAT CASE: USNS HUDSON

REFERENCE: A) STATE 208612; B) MANILA 12745

1. DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES AND APPRECIATES CONCERNS EXPRESSED
REF B, ESPECIALLY WITH REFERENCE TO PROPOSED DISEMBARKATION
OF REFUGEES AT SUBIC. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT HUMANITARI-
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AN CONCERNS REQUIRE THAT WE MOVE AS PROMPTLY AS POSSIBLE TO

RELIEVE PRESENT DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES OF REFUGEES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT AT LEAST TWO REFUGEES REQUIRE MEDICAL ATTENTION. QUARTERS ON HUDSON WHOLLY INADEQUATE TO ACCOMMODATE REFUGEE POPULATION. WEATHER IS DETERIORATING. NO OTHER PORT WITHIN EASY SAILING DISTANCE APPEARS MORE LIKELY TO ACCEPT REFUGEE. THUS, EMBASSY SHOULD APPROACH GOP IMMEDIATELY TO REQUEST THEIR ASSISTANCE FOR THESE REFUGEES ON A HUMANITARIAN BASIS ALONG FOLLOWING LINES.

2. AS INDICATED REFTTEL A, WE WOULD HOPE THAT GOP WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THESE REFUGEES ON A TEMPORARY BASIS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE UNHCR APPEAL TO COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM WHILE AWAITING PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE UNDER UNHCR AUSPICES.

3. WE RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT PRESENCE OF REFUGEES ABOARD A USNS SHIP ALTERS THE SITUATION IN AT LEAST ONE RESPECT IN THAT HUDSON IS A NAVY CONTRACT VESSEL. THEREFORE, U.S. IS PREPARED IN THIS CASE TO ACCEPT END RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RESETTLEMENT OF THESE REFUGEES OUTSIDE OF THE PHILIPPINES WITHIN THE LIMITS IMPOSED UPON US BY LAW.

4. THOSE REFUGEES QUALIFIED UNDER THE EPP CRITERIA WOULD BE PROCESSED IMMEDIATELY FOR ENTRY INTO THE U.S. WE WOULD EXPECT THE UNHCR TO ACT PROMPTLY AND VIGOROUSLY TO LOCATE RESETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEES NOT REPEAT NOT QUALIFIED UNDER THE EPP CRITERIA. NEVERTHELESS, IN THE EVENT THAT THE UNHCR WAS UNABLE TO RESETTLE THESE REFUGEES IN THIRD COUNTRIES, THE U.S. WOULD INCLUDE THEM UNDER THE EPP UNLESS ANY ARE INELIGIBLE FOR ENTRY INTO THE U.S. UNDER THE INA. IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THIS WILL PROVE THE CASE WITH ANY OF THIS GROUP (PARA 6 BELOW).

5. THE ONLY WAY WE COULD GIVE AN UNQUALIFIED GUARANTEE TO TAKE ALL OF THE HUDSON REFUGEES LANDED IN THE PHILIPPINES WOULD BE TO PLACE AN INS (IF AVAILABLE) OR CONSULAR OFFICER ABOARD THE HUDSON TO INTERVIEW THE REFUGEES PRIOR TO ITS LANDING AND TO OBTAIN VISA FALCON SECURITY CLEARANCES ON ALL ADULT REFUGEES BEFORE THEY ARE LANDED. ANY INELIGIBLE UNDER THE INA WOULD HAVE TO REMAIN ON THE HUDSON. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WE ARE PREPARED TO DO THIS AND EMBASSY MAY PROCEED TO DO SO IF NECESSARY. WE ARE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, ABOUT THE DELAY OCCASIONED BY THESE PROCEDURES, BOTH FROM A HUMANITARIAN STAND POINT AND IN TERMS OF LOGISTICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE SHIP ITSELF.

6. INITIAL BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON THE REFUGEES INDICATE THAT THIS IS A GROUP LARGELY MADE UP OF PROFESSIONAL

PEOPLE WHO CLAIM TO HAVE HAD NEITHER CRIMINAL RECORDS NOR ASSOCIATION WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY. WHILE EXACT STATISTICS DO NOT EXIST, IN THE ENTIRE INDOCHINESE REFUGEE PROGRAM, THERE HAVE BEEN, AT THE MOST, TWO DOZEN REFUSED BECAUSE OF SECURITY CLEARANCE PROBLEMS. THUS, WE HOPE THAT GOP WILL BE PREPARED TO RECEIVE THESE REFUGEES IMMEDIATELY. IF NOT, BUT GOP AGREES TO ACCEPT REFUGEES ON THE BASIS OF UNQUALIFIED GUARANTEES, ABOVE PROCEDURES SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED IMMEDIATELY. DEPARTMENT AGREES THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE DISCHARGE REFUGEES AT MANILA IF GOP APPROVAL IS OBTAINED.

7. FOR GENEVA: US MISSION GENEVA SHOULD MAKE STRONG REPRESENTATION REQUESTING UNHCR INSTRUCT UNHCR/MANILA DHAR TO SUPPORT US REQUEST. IF GOP AGREES THAT REFUGEES CAN BE LANDED, MISSION SHOULD ALSO URGE UNHCR PROVIDE ASSISTANCE IN RESETTLING ANY SUCH REFUGEES NOT QUALIFIED UNDER US CRITERIA AS WELL AS ANY REFUGEE WHO MIGHT BE LEFT ON BOARD HUDSON. KISSINGER

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